Listing of Claims:

1.   (currently amended) A set top box (STB) for decoding audio/video streams from multiple sources, the STB comprising:

a communication bus;

a processor coupled to the communication bus;

a hardware decoder for decoding audio/video streams;

a first stream receiver configured to receive a first audio/video stream from a first source, the first audio/video stream comprising a television signal;

a second stream receiver configured to receive a second audio/video stream from a second source, the second audio/video stream comprising Internet Protocol (IP) encapsulated audio/video data, and the second source comprising an IP source, wherein the second stream receiver is configured to communicate the IP encapsulated audio/video data through the communication bus to the processor, and wherein the processor is configured to extract the second audio video stream from the IP encapsulated audio video data; and

a stream selector, in addition to the communication bus and the processor, comprising first and second inputs, a select line, and an output, the first input coupled directly to the first stream receiver such that the first audio/video stream is capable of passing directly from the first stream receiver to the first input, the second input coupled to the second stream receiver through the communication bus so as to receive the extracted second audio/video stream, the select line coupled to the processor, and the output coupled directly to the hardware decoder such that a selected output from the stream selector is capable of passing directly from the stream selector to the hardware decoder,

wherein the stream selector is configured to selectively direct one of the first audio/video stream and the second audio/video stream to the hardware decoder under control of the processor through the select line, and

wherein the hardware decoder is configured to decode the selected output from the stream selector so as to convert <u>the first audio/video stream comprising </u>the television signal and <u>the second audio/video stream extracted from </u>the IP encapsulated audio/video data from an originally compressed state as provided by the first source and the second source, respectively.

2.   (previously presented) The STB of claim 1, wherein the audio/video stream comprises a Moving Picture Experts Group (MPEG) stream, and wherein the hardware decoder comprises an MPEG decoder.

3.   (original) The STB of claim 1, wherein the first stream receiver comprises a video tuner.

4.   (original) The STB of claim 3, wherein the first source comprises a cable television source.

5.   (original) The STB of claim 1, wherein the second stream receiver comprises a modem device.

6.   (original) The STB of claim 5, wherein the modem device comprises a Data Over Cable Service Interface Specification (DOCSIS) modem.

7.   (canceled)

8.   (previously presented) The STB of claim 1, wherein the stream selector comprises a multiplexer comprising the select line coupled to the processor.

9.   (original) The STB of claim 1, further comprising:

an audio/video controller coupled to the hardware decoder for formatting media streams for presentation by an external display device; and

an output coupled to the hardware decoder for providing operable connection to the external display device.

10.   (previously presented) The STB of claim 1, further comprising a storage device, coupled to the processor, for storing at least one of the first audio/video stream and the second audio/video stream.

11.   (currently amended) A method in a set top box (STB) for decoding audio/video streams from multiple sources, the STB comprising a hardware decoder and a processor, the method comprising:

receiving a first audio/video stream from a television source;

receiving a second audio/video stream from an Internet Protocol (IP) source;

directing the first audio/video stream directly from a first receiver to a first input of a stream selector;

directing the second audio/video stream from a second receiver to <u>the processor through a communication bus, wherein the processor is configured extract the second audio/video stream from a plurality of IP packets;</u>

<u>directing the extracted second audio/video stream to</u> a second input of the stream selector through the communication bus;

using the stream selector, under control of the processor, to selectively direct one of the first audio/video stream and the <u>extracted</u> second audio/video stream directly from an output of the stream selector to the hardware decoder for decoding, the hardware decoder capable of decoding the first audio/video stream and the second audio/video stream so as to convert the first audio/video stream and the second audio/video stream from an originally compressed state as respectively provided by the television source and the IP source.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the first audio/video stream comprises a Moving Picture Experts Group (MPEG) stream, and wherein the hardware decoder comprises an MPEG decoder.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the first receiver comprises a video tuner, and wherein the first audio/video stream is received by the video tuner within the STB.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the television source comprises a cable television source.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the second receiver comprises a modem device, and wherein the second audio/video stream is received by the modem device within the STB.

16. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein the modem device comprises a Data Over Cable Service Interface Specification (DOCSIS) modem.

17. (canceled)

18. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the stream selector comprises a multiplexer having a select line coupled to the processor.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, further comprising formatting the selected audio/video stream for presentation by an external display device.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, further comprising storing at least one of the first audio/video stream and the second audio/video stream in a storage device within the STB.

21-29. (canceled)

30.   (currently amended) A set top box (STB) for decoding audio/video streams from multiple sources, the STB comprising:

a communication bus

processing means coupled to the communication bus;

decoding means for decoding audio/video streams;

first means for receiving a first audio/video stream from a first source;

second means for receiving a series of data packets corresponding to a second audio/video stream from a second source, wherein the second means for receiving is configured to communicate the series of data packets to the processing means through the communication bus, and wherein the processing means is configured to extract the second audio/video stream from the series of data packets; and

stream selection means, in addition to the communication bus and the processing means, comprising first and second inputs, a select line, and an output, the first input coupled directly to the first means for receiving the first audio/video stream from the first source such that the first audio/video stream is capable of passing directly from the first means for receiving the first audio/video stream to the first input, the second input coupled to through the communication bus [[to]] so as to receive the extracted second means for receiving the second audio/video stream from the second source through the communication bus, the select line coupled to the processing means, and the output directly coupled to the decoding means such that a selected output from the stream selection means is capable of passing directly from the stream selection means to the decoding means,

wherein the stream selection means are configured to selectively direct one of the first audio/video stream and the second audio/video stream to the decoding means under control of the processing means through the select line, and

wherein the decoding means is configured to decode the selected output from the stream selection means so as to convert from an originally compressed state as provided by the first source and the second source.

31.   (currently amended) A multimedia communications apparatus comprising:

a receiver for receiving a multiplexed video signal and a streaming video signal from a multimedia communications network;

a first processing path coupled to the receiving device for tuning to, demodulating, and demultiplexing the multiplexed video signal;

a second processing path coupled to the receiving device for demodulating the streaming video signal into a series of data packets and for extracting a media stream from the series of data packets;

a communication bus directly coupled to an output of the second processing path;

a selector coupled directly to an output of the first processing path such that the output of the first processing path is capable of passing directly from the first processing path to the selector, the selector also coupled to the communication bus for communicating with the output of the second processing path, the selector for selecting between the output of the first processing path and the output of the second processing path; and

a decoder for decoding the selected output from the selector, wherein the decoder is configured to convert the video signals from an originally compressed state as provided by the multimedia communication network.

32.   (original) The multimedia communications apparatus of claim 31, wherein the receiver comprises a radio-frequency input coupled to a splitter, and the splitter comprises a first output coupled to the first processing path and a second output coupled to the second processing path.

33.   (previously presented) The multimedia communications apparatus of claim 32, wherein the first processing path comprises a video tuner coupled to the first output of the splitter, and wherein the second processing path comprises a modem device coupled to the second output of the splitter.

34.   (original) The multimedia communications apparatus of claim 31, wherein the decoder comprises a hardware-based decoder.

35.   (previously presented) The multimedia communications apparatus of claim 31, wherein the multiplexed video signal and the streaming video signal are both encoded using a same technique, and wherein the decoder includes capability to decode signals encoded using the same technique.

36. (original) The multimedia communications apparatus of claim 35, wherein the same technique comprises an MPEG encoding technique.

37. (original) The multimedia communications apparatus of claim 35, wherein the same technique comprises a Digicypher encoding technique.

38. (original) The multimedia communications apparatus of claim 31, wherein the receiver is integrated with a set top box.

39. (original) The multimedia communications apparatus of claim 31, wherein the receiver is integrated with a television set.

40-41. (canceled)